

XVII.—On *Charadrius asiaticus* and *Ch. damarensis*.

By Dr. O. FINSCH.

THROUGH a dear friend of mine, Paul Conrad, Captain of the Bremen barque 'Herzog Ernst,' I received a pair of Red-breasted Plovers collected by him during his stay at Saigon, in Cochinchina. Both specimens were shot on the 11th of April, 1870, and proved, on dissection, to be male and female. The male is in full nuptial dress, and agrees exactly with the plate of *Charadrius caspius* of Pallas (Zoogr.), as the celebrated author renamed the species formerly described by him as *Ch. asiaticus*.

Mr. J. E. Harting has given a full account of this species in his excellent article "On rare or little-known *Limicolæ*" (Ibis, 1870, p. 201), and shown that these are two allied species which have been hitherto nearly always confounded. In comparing the specimens from Saigon with others from Australia and Damaraland, as well as with the figures and descriptions published on this species, I find that Mr. Harting is quite right with respect to the specific distinctness of the two; but his synonymy requires rectification. The smaller one, called by him *Eudromias asiaticus* (pl. v.), must stand as *Ch. damarensis*, Strickl.; whereas the larger kind, *Eu. veredus*, Gould (pl. vi.), is the true

CHARADRIUS ASIATICUS, Pall.

Charadrius asiaticus, Pall. Reise, ii. p. 715 (1773).

Asiatic Plover, Lath. Syn. iii. (1785) p. 207 (ex Pall.); Bechst. Lath. Uebersicht, iii. (1796) p. 181.

Charadrius asiaticus, Gmel. S. N. ii. (1788) p. 684 (ex Pall.).

C. jugularis, Wagl. Syst. Av. (1827) sp. 39 (ex Pall.).

C. caspius, Pall. Zoogr. Rosso-As. ii. (1831) p. 136, pl. 58 (= *asiaticus*).

C. asiaticus, Blas. in Nachtr. zu Naum. vol. xiii. (1860) p. 225, t. 386. f. 1 (ad.).

C. veredus, Gould, P. Z. S. 1848, p. 38; *id.* B. Austr. vi. pl. 14.

Cirrepidesmus asiaticus, Gould, Handb. B. Austr. ii. (1865) p. 229 (= *veredus*).

Charadrius asiaticus, Schleg. Mus. P. B. Cursores (1865), p. 38 (sol. spec. no. 5).

Eudromias veredus, Harting, Ibis, 1870, p. 209, t. vi.

Although Pallas gives no measurements, there can be no doubt that he had before him the larger species, which Mr. Gould afterwards named *Ch. veredus* from young specimens procured in Australia.

Captain Conrad's male specimen from Saigon agrees, as already stated, in every detail with Pallas's description and figure. As in the representation of the latter, the forehead, a broad stripe above the eye to the temporal region, the sides of head, the chin, and throat are white; the jugulum is covered by a broad cinnamon-rufous cross band, edged below by a narrow black line; and the legs and toes are ochreous yellow ("Rostrum pedesque ut in *Hiaticula*," Pall.), as represented also in the plates published by the late Prof. Blasius and Mr. Harting. The former naturalist includes *Ch. asiaticus* in 'Nauman's Vögel Deutschlands,' a specimen having been obtained in Heligoland by Mr. Gätke; but without a comparison of this specimen it will be difficult to decide to which species it belongs. Prof. Blasius describes: "die grossen Schwungfedern von der 6 ten an mit weissem Flecke an der Aussenfahne," which is not observable in *Ch. asiaticus*, but in the smaller *Ch. damarensis*, which has a white basal patch on the outer web of the 7-11th remiges. Apparently some mistake must have occurred in this description; but the figure certainly is that of the true *Ch. asiaticus*. In those given by Mr. Harting the eye-stripe is not pure white, but washed with pale buff, showing that the bird had not yet attained its full plumage.

The female from Saigon has the front, eye-stripe, the sides of the head and neck, forming a collar round the nape (which is much paler and inclining to whitish in the male), the throat and breast rufescent, darker on the posterior parts, and paler on the chin. Otherwise it resembles the male, and would assume a similar dress, as there are some moulting, though still hidden feathers on the jugulum which are as dark rufous as in the male.

A specimen in winter plumage from North-eastern Australia (Lake Elphinstone) resembles the young as described by Mr. Harting (p. 210); but the pale buff colour on the

sides of the neck does not extend round the neck, showing that the rufous collar is not an invariable characteristic of this species.

CHARADRIUS DAMARENSIS, Strickl.; Contrib. to Ornith. 1852, p. 158.

Ch. asiaticus, Schleg. Mus. P. B. Cursor. p. 38 (excl. spec. no. 5).

Eudromias asiaticus, Harting (nec Pall.), Ibis, 1870, p. 203 (excl. syn.), t. v.

I have not seen the male of this species in full plumage, and must therefore refer to the excellent figure given by Mr. Harting; but I have examined three specimens in winter dress from Damaraland, collected by the late Mr. Andersson.

A male, shot at Otjimbingue on the 15th of December 1864, agrees exactly in coloration with the Australian specimen of *Ch. asiaticus* in winter plumage; on the jugulum there are still some hidden rufous feathers, which are the remains of the summer plumage.

Two females from the same locality are very similar. In one, shot in February, the brown feathers on the upper parts are decidedly pale-margined, forming a collar round the nape; the front, eye-stripe, sides of the head, the chin and throat are buff-coloured. This specimen agrees very closely with the female of *Ch. asiaticus* from Saigon.

It is therefore not always easy, at least in the immature and winter plumages, to distinguish *Ch. asiaticus* and *damarensis* by the plumage only; but the measurements will invariably show the difference, as will be seen by the following Table (in French measurements, vide 'Vögel Ostafrika's').

Long. al.	caud.	rostr.	a front.	tars.	tib. nud.	dig. med.	
6'' 3'''	25'''	10'''	21'''	8'''	9'''	<i>asiaticus</i> ♂	Saigon.
6 2	26	9½	20	10	8½	„ ♀	„
6 2	25	10	21	9½	9	„	Australia.
6 2	27	10½	20	8	9½	„	(ap. Blasius).
6 6	25½	13½	24	...	...	„	(<i>veredus</i> , ap. Gould).
6 0	29	9	19	8	8	„	(No. 5. Leid. Mus.)
5 6	24	9	18	9½	9	<i>damarensis</i> ♂	Damaraland.
5'' 2'''-5'' 5''	28	8½-9	16-17	7½	7-8	„	(<i>asiaticus</i> , ap. Schl. nos. 1-4)

The distinguishing characters for the two species would therefore stand, after my experience :—

<i>Ch. asiaticus.</i>	<i>Ch. damarensis.</i>
Larger; wings and tarsus always longer.	Smaller.
Legs and toes yellowish.	Legs and toes blackish.
Axillaries like the under wing-coverts, earth-brown.	Axillaries white.
Remiges without white.	Outer web of the 7-11 remiges with a white basal patch.

XVIII.—Remarks on the *Mniotiltine* Genus *Geothlypis*.

By OSBERT SALVIN, M.A., F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c.

SOME months ago our collector in Veragua, Enrique Arce, sent us a single specimen of a *Geothlypis*, from the slopes of the Volcano of Chiriqui, which has perplexed me not a little. In endeavouring to form a just view as to its proper position, my observations have ranged over nearly every recognized member of the genus, specimens of all but one of which are before me, furnished by Mr. Godman's and my own collection and by that of Mr. Selater*.

The latest published account of this genus is contained in Prof. Baird's 'Review of American Birds,' p. 219 *et seqq.* From this work it might be gathered that, so far as *Geothlypis æquinoctialis* was concerned, and its closely allied races, the whole of tropical America was occupied by one or other of them, and that it was hardly probable that other races of the same form yet remained to be discovered. The receipt of the specimen above referred to shows us that our information was still incomplete.

One or other of the races of *G. æquinoctialis* is included in each of the large faunas of South America. Thus in Brazil we find *G. velata*†; in Guiana, Trinidad and Venezuela, and the U. S. of Columbia we have *G. æquinoctialis*; and in Central

* The only species I have not seen is *Geothlypis rostratis*, Bryant, from Nassau, Bahama Is. (Proc. Boston Soc. N. H. xi. p. 67 (1866). Its nearest ally is said to be *G. trichas*; but as I have had no opportunity of examining specimens, I omit further mention of it in the present paper. It would appear to be resident in Nassau.

† The synonymy of all the species here mentioned is so fully investigated in Prof. Baird's work already quoted that it would be superfluous to retrace this part of the subject.